

Pacemates dance, entertain troops, families

By **Barbara L. Sellers**
Northwest Guardian

Free entertainment, games and prizes brought more than 700 people into Carey Theater Saturday.

Thirteen dancers from the Indiana Pacers of the National Basketball Association, plus their two mascots, performed a one-hour variety show that included all kinds of competitions, for young and old alike.

Some of the contests included: musical chairs, a youngsters' tricycle and jump rope race, a quiz, an adult limbo contest for women and an adult dance competition for men.

"We just love meeting the kids and the Soldiers, and seeing all the smiles we put on their faces," said Stacy Austin, coach of the Indiana Pacemates. "We really enjoy doing these shows because it gives us the feeling of giving something back to the Soldiers and their families for doing so much for us."

To put on a variety show of that magnitude, the dancers practice three hours a night, three or four nights a week, for two weeks, she said.

Austin, who performed on the dance team herself for nine years, puts the dance routines together and does all of the choreography for the show.

While performing as a dancer on the team, Austin first met Patrick McGhee, Post Exchange store manager who invited them to Fort Lewis, about 10 years ago. McGhee was at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., when Austin went there, and, later, he was at Fort Hood, Texas, when her dance team performed there.



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The Indiana Pacemates performed many dance routines Saturday during their free show for the military community at Carey Theater.

Capt. Daniel Rausch, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, received a big-screen plasma TV, for winning the adult male dance competition; and Ganice Arnold, spouse of Sgt. 1st Class Rick Arnold, received a home video system for winning the adult women's limbo competition.

"I never did the limbo before in my whole life, but it was fun," Arnold said. "This show offers good, clean fun for everyone, and it's really nice to have an activity like this that the whole family can enjoy."

"The Pacemates are

wonderful, and they are really putting on a fantastic show. I certainly hope it continues."

Andrea Quezada, spouse of Sgt. Michael Quezada, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, correctly named the first NBA dance team to perform in

1970 to 1972 (the Pacemates). Between the quizzes, games, the many different costume changes and dance routines, several free T-shirts were tossed into the audience.

"I think all of these variety shows are really cool," said Anthony Good, 11. "I like the dances, the games and the prizes. I like it all."

So far, Good has attended two other shows with his mother, April Good.

"I won a \$50 gift certificate last time, and tonight I won tickets to attend a Sonics game at KeyArena in Seattle," April Good said.

Kathryn Betz, who lives in Yelm, said the show was the first one she had attended because she didn't know about the other ones.

"It's especially great the way they involve the kids in the program," said Staff Sgt. Mingo Thomas, 14th Engineer Battalion (rear detachment). "The prizes are really nice, too."

In addition to performing several variety shows throughout the United States, the dance team performs similar shows for the troops overseas.

"In 2004, the AFE (Armed Forces Entertainment) sponsored us in Kosovo, Bosnia and Austria, and in 2005, they sponsored us in England, Norway and Iceland," Austin said.

Before the evening show began, the dance team signed posters at the Fort Lewis Post Exchange, from noon until 2 p.m.

Barbara L. Sellers can be contacted at 967-0172 or e-mail barbara.l.sellers@lewis.army.mil.

Librarian kicks off monthly 'Tell Us Your Story' event with tale of her own

By **Spc. Derron A. Dickinson**
28th Public Affairs Detachment

A Fort Lewis librarian presented the first in a new series of free programs intended to allow people to tell their life experiences at Grandstaff Library Feb. 28 from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Christi Bayha, a librarian at Grandstaff, gave a presentation on the trip she took to provide books to a library in a remote village in Nigeria.

The peace group, Global Citizen Journey, organized the trip to the Creeks region in the Delta state of Nigeria,

where the State Department discourages traveling due to the frequent tribal clashes.

The community Bayha visited had been fighting with a neighboring village just one year before.

Now, both communities can benefit from the new library.

Bayha responded to an e-mail request looking for a librarian to join the quest to build a library in the village of Oporoza. She was selected as one of three librarians to aid in the organization of the library.

Bayha described the many difficult

challenges she faced on the journey. Most of the team carried a bag full of books to save the cost of shipping them. Oporoza was only reachable by boat. Though the villagers owned modern conveniences like cellular phones and satellite dishes, the village had no running water and only occasional electricity.

The water they did have had not been purified and often killed the livestock.

The team worked hard to get the library going in time. Some of the books were narrowly rescued from a downpour while the library was being organized. When Bayha rushed to respond, she

found the local children were ahead of her, carrying armloads of books in from the rain, anxious to save the precious volumes.

"It really made me feel good about what we were doing," she said. The children would also sneak into the library to read books before it had officially opened.

When Bayha arrived, the village had only two books, not including bibles. When the library opened on Nov. 28, the village boasted 1,400 books on the shelves, a TV, a DVD player, and six computers. The opening ceremonies

lasted more than four hours and drew in excess of 1,000 people.

While Bayha said she has no plans to undertake another such venture, she would like to see how the village is doing.

"I am hoping to go back to visit," she said.

The next "Tell Us Your Story" event is scheduled for April 3 at Grandstaff Library from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Marie Lindsey will be speaking on her experiences as a Fort Lewis librarian during the integration of the Armed Forces.